

Appendix I

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DEAN C. WILLARD HECKEL, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED COMMUNITY CORPORATION SUBMITTED TO THE NEWARK MUNICIPAL COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON THE ANTI-POVERTY PROGRAM-THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 9, 1965.

The United Community Corporation welcomes the opportunity, afforded by an interested Newark Municipal Council, to report on the development of our City's Anti-Poverty Program. The study is well timed for it comes just about one year after the United Community Corporation was formed, at the invitation of the Mayor, by a group of civic minded citizens who represented many walks of life and community interests. The United Community Corporation as constituted today is made up of over five thousand members who live in, work in, or perform a direct service to Newark. Its members include government officials, business leaders, professionals, teachers, clergymen, social agency personnel and supporters, civic and group relations leaders.

The Corporation's governing body is a Board of Trustees which reflects in its composition the community, including Mayor Addonizio and representatives of the Council who sit on the Board which meets monthly. It is important to note that the United Community Corporation Board is more than 50% non-white. This in itself is unique in American life, for it is rare that our minority groups have the opportunity to share so fully in any major decision making body. Of course, it is also a sad commentary in our society that poverty is so closely tied to

the color of a man's skin or the fact that he may be an American of Hispanic Origin. The Board is headed by Officers which they elect annually. These men and women together with Standing Committee Chairmen make up an Executive Committee which has been meeting at least once a week since the inception of the United Community Corporation.

When we undertook the responsibility for developing anti-poverty programs we were faced with the need for professional leadership. From the beginning, we came to the conclusion that the problems facing this City relative to poverty were so immense that only the most experienced leadership would do. Altogether we adhere to the philosophy that Newark deserves the best. As we see it, these are critical years in our Nation's history, and Newark itself is, like other major cities, deep in crisis. Nevertheless, we have deep faith in our community and its future. We set up a Personnel Committee under the Chairmanship of the late Peter V. R. Schuyler, Jr., an early UCC supporter and leader. That Committee searched this community, it searched the entire country. Numerous men with varying qualifications were heard from. Finally, after several months we were fortunate to convince one of the nation's most talented and creative men to come here.

Having had experience in one of the forerunners of the Anti-Poverty Programs, Haryou, where he was Project Director of a study of Central Harlem which produced "Youth in the Ghetto" and Acting Director of HARYOU-ACT, the implementing agency, Cyril D. Tyson was uniquely qualified to guide the program. In the short time that he has been here he has been able to create, out of nothing, a Community Action Program which many cities envy. No one active in this City could deny the impact of Tyson's work.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE UNITED COMMUNITY CORPORATION

It should be pointed out that the development of the United Community Corporation also involved growing pains. This is understandable in light of the fact that we started with no real guidelines. The Economic Opportunity Act itself was new and revolutionary. Everybody was feeling his way in uncharted waters, even the Federal Government was not quite certain of its course. These difficulties included making up a Board. As we look back today, we discover that there are still many inadequacies. Perhaps there ought to be a wider range of community and governmental representatives to help in dealing with the Anti-Poverty battle. Most important, while the ratio of poor has improved on the Board due to an increase in number and an effort to add poor to the nominated slate, we are still not satisfied with their share.

In addition to these problems, we faced many others.

During our early days when the staff was small, we were being pressed into immediate action and the need for programs. This made it impossible for us to study every initial undertaking as carefully as some Board Members would have liked. This was, at times, somewhat frustrating. Nevertheless, the programs that were approved and subsequently funded, seem to be working quite well and effectively. Finally, in spite of a concentrated effort it has grieved us that we have not as yet found enough local talent for all staff positions. This is unfortunate, but we still believe that we are obligated to bring Newark the best. It should also be noted that of thirty-four employees, twenty-six reside in Newark, five in Metropolitan Essex County, one in Union County and two in New York.

#### PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

The United Community Corporation received its first program development grant of \$184,122.00 in February of this year. Approximately one third of the funds or \$56,700.00

was allocated for the development of the first three of the nine area boards that would be the organizing and community action vehicles for the impoverished of Newark.

The first three area boards are: Area # 1, Project; Concern ---Area # 2, "Operation We Care"----Area # 3, Peoples' Action Group, all located in the Central Part of the City. They have trustees elected by the residents of their particular geographical area and are in various stages of program development and refining of their organizational structure. The United Community Corporation has received an additional grant that provides for the development of three more area boards.

Preliminary organizing meetings were held last week in two areas; Northeast Newark and Ironbound and the organizing meeting for Dayton will be held this week. Within the next two months the Corporation will apply for funds to organize the poor in the last three areas of the City; Northwest Newark, Weequahic and Vailsburg. At the completion of this process the City of Newark, which has been declared a depressed area by the Federal Government, will be completely organized as part of the process of providing full participation by the poor in anti-poverty programming.

AREA BOARD REPRESENTATIVES IN PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND POLICY

It has been necessary, because of the urgent needs of the City, to collapse time and work on a number of levels at the same time, in order to insure that programs were funded even while the systematic involvement of the poor in program development was being organized. An explanation of the various levels of program development may enhance your understanding of the aims and goals of the United Community Corporation.

At the same time that the communities were in the process of developing area boards, the Corporation was requesting those same communities to elect temporary representatives to various program development committees that were planning city-wide programs. As a result of this process, the poor participated in the development of the Newark Pre-School Council and are represented on the Council's Board of Trustees. The Council is the delegate agency for the development of year-round pre-school programs in churches and social agencies that have had no prior experience in the field of child care. Area Board representatives were part of the Personnel Committee established by the Board of Education to recruit and screen individuals who applied for positions as Teacher Aide and Teacher In Training, in the Operation "Head Start".

Program that provided nearly 3,000 children with a summer pre-school experience. More than 300 community residents were employed in this program. Area Board representatives participated as an Advisory Committee to the Police Athletic League, in their administration of the Summer Neighborhood Block Recreational Program, and a sub-committee was part of the Personnel Committee that recruited and screened community residents for employment in the program. Area Board Representatives are provided for in the Constitution of the Blazer Community Employment Training Program which has received approval by the Office of Economic Opportunity to administer a work training program for 200 welfare recipients. Area Board representatives participated in the development of the Small Business Development Center Proposal and will be members of the governing body. This program to be funded under Title IV of the Economic Opportunity Act, is now pending in Washington. Another program pending approval in Washington is a proposal to provide Legal Services to the Poor. Area Board representatives participated in the planning of this proposal and will be represented on the Board of the Administering Corporation.

Area Board representatives constitute an Advisory Committee to the Senior Citizens Commission, which has a sub-contract to develop a city-wide Senior Citizens Program to be presented to the Office of Economic Opportunity for funding. In addition, there are two programs in various stages of planning: City-wide Remedial and Tutorial Program, and City-Wide Arts and Culture Programs which have area board representatives. There are positions available on the Policy Boards of these programs for Area Boards that are not yet developed. What the Corporation is articulating here, gentlemen, is the right of the poor to participate in anti-poverty programs, not only as recipients of a service, but as program developers, employees and policy makers.

#### THE ROLE OF TASK FORCES

While the process of developing community organizations was proceeding, and while temporary representation in all areas of city-wide program development was secured from the developing area boards, the United Community Corporation was entertaining proposals that were approved by the relevant Task Force which is a sub-committee of the Program Committee of the Corporation. These Task Forces, composed of residents of Newark who are members and non-members of the Corporation evaluate proposals and recommend to the Board of Trustees courses of action.

The Task Forces are usually chaired by members of the Corporation. The Education Task Force approved "Operation Head Start", administered by the Board of Education, The Queen of Angels' Summer Remediation Program; the Seton Hall High School Head Start Summer Program; the Newark Pre-School Council Program and the Mount Carmel Guild Pre-School Readiness Opportunity Project (PROP). The Employment Task Force approved the Jewish Vocational Service Career Oriented Preparation for Employment Proposal (COPE), The Blazer Council Work Experience Proposal; and the Mount Carmel Guild Youth Chance Proposal. The Community Action Task Force approved the proposals for the development of the area boards and their boundaries; and the Summer Neighborhood Block Recreational Program sponsored by the Police Athletic League.

All programs which have received funds from the government, did not go through this process. Approval of the Corporation was not required in all instances of programs emanating from Metropolitan Newark. However, where such approval was required or requested by the Office of Economic Opportunity, it was provided by the Corporation. These programs included: The Housing Authority

Neighborhood Youth Corp Proposal, the Board of Education Work Study Proposal, the City Administration's Neighborhood Youth Corp Proposal, the Welfare Title V Work Experience Proposal and the Bureau of Employment Service Youth Opportunity Center Proposal.

RESTRUCTURING THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Third process going on simultaneously was the restructuring of the Board of Trustees of the Corporation. As you are aware, the United Community Corporation is an open membership organization. Anyone living, working or having a major interest in Newark can become a member of the Corporation by simply filling out a membership blank. It is the membership that elects the Board of Trustees.

At the first annual meeting the membership expressed their desire to allow for voting at large for some members of the Board of Trustees, along with the approval or disapproval of a slate of Board Members arrived at through open meetings provided by the Nominating Committee as a vehicle for expansion of Board Membership. As indicated earlier, the Corporation is presently considering recommendations to the membership that will further expand the Board to provide specific representation from all area boards and increased

representation from city agencies, commissions and departments. It seems quite clear to me that as the Corporation organizes the poor ... city-wide basis to attack poverty, that the membership of the Board of Trustees must reflect this larger commitment. Therefore the need for systematic representation by the area boards and the city on the Board of Trustees.

It was also recognized that many of the programs would touch on the lives of youth under twenty-one and the Corporation thought that young people of high school age should have the opportunity to be involved in the decision making process concerning programs that affect the city in which they live. In addition, it would provide the basis for participating in the democratic process while exposing the adults to insights on the needs of youth. To meet this objective, the age for membership in the Corporation was lowered from twenty-one to fifteen.

THE DELINEATION OF PRIORITIES

Finally, the Corporation perceived that the real challenge was in utilizing the funds available in a creative way. This required an over-all plan, and priorities that related to the amount of monies available and the needs of the City.

The beginning approach utilized by the Corporation recognized the need for as many Neighborhood Youth Corp Programs as possible as long as they were not conflicting with one another. The City Administration had taken the initiative, and received the first Neighborhood Youth Corp grant in the country. The Housing Authority has a similar grant training youth in their facilities and Mount Carmel Guild will be training youth under this program in affiliated institutions. The Jewish Vocational Service Program in this area will provide training in social work and recreational agencies. However, plans had to be made to create the additional steps needed to make the under twenty-one youth employable. Where would he go after the training program ended? The present plan is to move to expand the social service programs of various agencies in Newark with pre-professional and sub-professional jobs allocated in the expanded budget. In addition, the Corporation will move for expanded On-Job-Training Programs.

Both of these approaches allow for the involvement of Neighborhood Youth Corp individuals after graduation or at any time that the Counsellors shall determine a youth has the aptitude for such work of employment. Of course, the regular labor market is available but has not been adequate for the needs of Newark especially for minority group youth which constitute a clear majority of the youth unemployed.

The second priority was in the area of preventative programming. The Corporation allocated in the first fiscal year its Title II funds to Education. We have set in motion year round pre-school education, which has since been recommended to all communities by the Federal Government. We are also working closely with the Board of Education to link the anti-poverty act with the Education Act for the benefit of the City.

We have now moved to the third priority level, the Expansion of Social Agency Services. In our first meeting with representatives of all the agencies in Newark, the Corporation outlined aims and goals. Of course, some of the organizations are represented

on our Board of Trustees and most of them are affiliated with Welfare Federation which is represented on our Board of Trustees. We shared with them the need to plan expansion of programs and requested that they involve representation from the area board, in which they are located, to participate in the planning. In addition, we requested that they reconsider the criteria by which they determine eligibles to their Board of Trustees to allow for greater participation of the poor in a policy level position. All of these processes have been going on in seven short months since Federal Funds were received. We will continue to be sensitive to the needs to evolve a Corporation that represents the interests of the poor for we are, in fact, the custodians of their monies.

PARTICIPATION OF MUNICIPAL AGENCIES

Upon recommendation of the Executive Committee of the United Community Corporation, the Mayor established a Coordinating Committee for the development of human resources under the Business Administrator. This Committee, composed of representatives from agencies and organizations that receive or could receive anti-poverty

funds, or funds through other relevant legislation meets bi-weekly. It is a vehicle for keeping the Mayor informed on all matters relating to program activities.

The Corporation has contracted with the Senior Citizens Commission of Newark to prepare a city-wide proposal for programs for the elderly. The Board of Education administered the "Head Start" Program and has participated in the planning of Educational Programs by our delegate agencies. The City Museum is participating along with the Mayor's Office in the development of a proposal for a city-wide Arts and Culture Program. The Department of Welfare is screening welfare recipients as prospective trainees in the Blazer Council Work Training Program. The Police Department, through the Police Athletic League, was the delegate agency which administered the Summer Neighborhood Block Recreation Improvement Program, which provided recreation, camp experience, and work training opportunities for Newark youth.

Finally, the Bureau of Employment Service, Division of Employment Security have provided counselling and guidance services for various Neighborhood Youth Corp Projects and has been utilized as a source of staff recruitment, screening and evaluating candidates for this Corporation.

The late President John F. Kennedy in his inaugural address stated that the torch has been passed on to a new generation and implored communities to begin the reconstruction of democracy. We have begun in the City of Newark. The United Community Corporation has dedicated itself to creating a better day for citizens, some of whom have suffered for generations from the ravages of inequality and poverty. With the help of the City Council, the Mayor and the community itself, we will win this fight.